



The Greatest Living Memorial to Lincoln

by Frank W. Ryan



A PERIOD of twenty years has come and gone since General Oliver Otis Howard, catching his inspiration from the lips of Lincoln, founded a remarkable college in the midst of the Appalachian Mountains, at Cumberland Gap, Tennessee. He called it the "Lincoln Memorial University." He might have called it a "University for Lost Americans." For its mission is that of pointing the way to progress for nearly five millions of pure-blooded Americans who, though descended from the pioneers who settled in the southern mountains before the Revolution, are hemmed in, isolated, out of step with the world, living under practically the same primitive conditions as did their forebears.

For this deplorable condition the mountaineers cannot be blamed; they are the victims of circumstance. Their poverty and ignorance have come about through natural causes. The prosperous farmer of western New York might still be groping in a backwoods wilderness had his ancestors settled in western Virginia instead of western New York.

Their isolation is due to geological accident. Appalachian America has great diversities of surface and climate, from "dissected plateau" in eastern Kentucky across the "blue ridge," down through the "land of the sky" to the "knobs" of Georgia. But as a place of habitation it has but one characteristic—it is a land of saddlebags. This single circumstance—the lack of waterways and the tremendous obstacles in transportation—has barred the progress of the race that settled there. Railroads have gone around the region instead of through it, and while the rest of the nation forged forward, the mountain folk have stood still.

The pitiful conditions under which the southern mountain people are born, struggle a few years, and die, stagger belief. One-room cabins are all that many know as homes from babyhood to old age. Here and there, to be sure, are to be found



STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY MIXING CONCRETE

more pretentious homesteads, but even these lack the comforts—the simplest comforts—that the poorest of the poor in progressive communities are allotted. A typical home of the better class might be thus described:

Two big log boxes, eighteen feet square and fifteen feet apart, with a roof between; this space open front and rear, constituting the general family reception room and dining place. Three small adjuncts are near at hand—smoke house, loom house and spring house.

The family are supplied from their own "boundary" with an abundance of corn meal, string beans, dried fruit, "long sweetening" (syrup) and hog meat. Also wool and flax, and possibly a little cotton. They barter feathers and "sang" at the "store house" on court day for boots, coffee, and patent medicines.

This is the best type of mountain life. Beside it are types less hopeful. But all

are on a par as to resources in books and education. They are without them. Saddest of all is the bewildering lack of well-informed leaders. The average preacher of the mountains is inclined to be suspicious of the "book larnin'" he has failed to acquire. Religion itself is a melancholy affair connected with funerals and sectarian squabbles.

Yet these people are the purest-blooded

Americans in the land. Some of the stately names belonging to the aristocracy of England and France in generations past, so uncommon as to be unmistakable in their sources, are borne by mountain folk.

During a long period of illiteracy there have been phonetic changes, but their origin is never in doubt.



GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Maintained by the Lincoln Memorial University both for its own backward students starting in and for the children of the "Gap" district



PRINT SHOP AT THE UNIVERSITY

Pussival was Percival, Fulkerson was Foulkeson, Vannoy was de Vanois, Ep was Eppes, Manis was Mannyse, Bales was Beales, Hagwood was Haguwode, etc.

Not only the names but the features of these mountaineers speak of the distinguished ancestry from which they have sprung. Although they are ignorant, they are not vicious, and they look out of their clear eyes in a straightforward fashion, which is not characteristic of the ordinary

native, and far, far different from the countenances of more prosperous, more enlightened immigrants, whose worldly success cannot blot out the unmistakable peasant stamp. The features of the mountain people are clean cut, and their carriage naturally erect.

Their speech, their legends, their folklore, their songs—all reflect their genealogy. They know little of the tunes the rest of



PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY AND HIS STAFF
Dr. George A. Hubbell, president of Lincoln Memorial University, standing in center

the country has learned, and which have come to be known as "typically American." One will find children in some of the mountain homes who have never even sung "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," though "Old Black Joe" and "My Old Kentucky Home" have come to some of them through the Gap. They sing the songs of a bygone day; old English ballads, such as "Barbara Allen" and the "Swapping Song," brought

over by the Jamestown settlers, and such songs of their own invention as "Little Mohee."

These people need the friendly guidance and financial aid in educational beginnings which have been so lavishly distributed in all other sections of America. They are a patriotic, capable people, with unjaded nerves and red blood who, when



STUDENTS BUILDING NEW DAIRY BARN

lifted out of their mental slough will re-enforce the vigor of the nation.

Lincoln came of their stock. Prototypes of the great President as he must have appeared in his teens, poring over borrowed books by the light of a pine knot blazing on the hearth, are common to this day in the rugged vicinity of Cumberland Gap. Farragut's fighting spirit was born of mountain stock. General Sam Houston was a mountain Governor of Tennessee before he went to Texas to make his name imperishable. Presidents Polk and Johnson were mountain bred. Jumping the

Those six thumbled-over books gave the nation its greatest man. Lincoln Memorial University takes the place of those books. It is giving to the poor boys and girls of the mountains the chance those six books gave to Lincoln.

Lincoln Memorial is just such an institution as Lincoln would have gloried in attending. Born out of the inspiration of his greatness, it is fashioned and modelled as he would have wished to see it. It is not a charity. There is no humiliation attached to becoming a student, for every young man and woman pays his or her

way, either by money saved and hoarded, usually by a whole family, or by labor during the school course. Only the tuition is free.

The six books are there; the blazing pine knot is there; the example of Lincoln is there. If the mountain youth has it in him, he'll plunge through the pall of ignorance and enter the race of life on even terms with other American boys and girls.

The University is the avenue of escape from illiteracy, old worldishness, mental stagnation,

and a life of squalor and poverty. Self-help is the keynote. The University points the way, guides the course, steadies the rudder. But the student must do his own rowing. And they are doing it.

The effects of the teaching of Lincoln Memorial University are not confined to the minds, habits and newly aroused ambitions of the students fortunate enough to enroll and complete its course. Every mountain home from which a boy or girl is allowed to travel down to the Gap to school reflects the uplifted life of that student when he returns home. They have been given a glimpse of the outside world, of new methods of farming, sanitation,



LEARNING TO USE MICROSCOPE IN FIELD WORK

years to the present day, Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo hails from the mountains of the South.

They were the exceptions, perhaps, but exceptions only so far as opportunity went. Had Lincoln not had access to the six books his biographers tell about—the books that awakened his irresistible ambition—he might have gone through life, and to the grave, as countless mountain men are doing, with no greater prospect than rail-splitting, corn pone, homespun clothing, mule-riding and a log cabin to live in, with perhaps a family feud to add the bitterness of hate to the pinch of poverty.



GIRLS OF THE UNIVERSITY AT PLAY

building, cooking—everything that goes to make life under the humblest circumstances a little more worth living.

The mountain boys are of the Lincoln type: high principled, clean cut, six-foot, upstanding, keen, quiet, courageous. It does one's heart good to help one of these young giants, who comes stalking in, perhaps after a three-days' journey on foot, with a few hard-earned dollars in his pockets and a great eagerness to get an education he can hardly comprehend. Why, many of the Lincoln University students see their first railroad train when they reach Cumberland Gap!

It is a joy to welcome the mountain girl who comes back to the University after having taught her first school, bringing money to pay her debts and perhaps bringing a

younger sister. Needless to say, such a girl exerts a great influence in her school and mountain home.

It is one of the pledges of students of the Lincoln University, coming to earn their own way, that when they have finished the prescribed course they shall return to their home sections and teach those left behind. Thus at the outset the boys and girls are enlisted as social

missionaries, and their whole college life is in keeping with these high ideals.

There is no time for frivolity at the University. Getting an education is a serious matter for these young men and women. They are in blood earnest. "High fliers" would find scant company. At present there are seven hundred students, the majority of them earning their



IN THE CREAMERY

way. The boys till the fields—the college fortunately has six hundred acres of land—reap the crops, market the products of their labors, do all the chores of a great farm and all under the watchful guidance of agricultural experts. Besides, they are taught engineering, carpentry, masonry, and other practical trades which will stand

branches. There are the schools of letters, science, music, nursing, agriculture, industrial arts, domestic science and business. In all of these the aim is practical rather than theoretic. What a vista for an ambitious mountain boy or girl!

But, unfortunately, many who wish to enter the University cannot do so. The

facilities are too limited to accommodate them. Twice the number admitted into the classes every year are forced to remain at home disappointed. And now hundreds of young men and women from parts of the country far distant from the mountains—ambi-



THE NEW GRANT-LEE HALL IN PROCESS OF CONSTRUCTION

tious city-bred youths who have heard of the wonderful opportunity which is offered at the Lincoln University—are beginning to apply for admittance.

So it is with the girls. They sew and bake, scrub and wash dishes as earnestly as they struggle with irregular verbs. And there is no sense of humiliation in this. It is the most democratic college in America.

The teaching is on a par with that in the best institutions in the land. The degrees are *bona fide*—Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Music. In the faculty are graduates of Johns Hopkins, Harvard, Columbia, Haverford, Wellesley, Amherst, Wooster, the Universities of Chicago, Tennessee, Indiana, the Sherwood School of Music, Massachusetts State Normal, Michigan Agricultural College and the Bowling Green Business College.

The University maintains seven general

tious city-bred youths who have heard of the wonderful opportunity which is offered at the Lincoln University—are beginning to apply for admittance.

The University through the momentum of the sterling principles upon which it was founded, has assumed a national aspect, has come to be the hope of struggling,



THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC, FORMERLY A. A. ARTHUR'S HOME

earnest youths and maidens the country over.

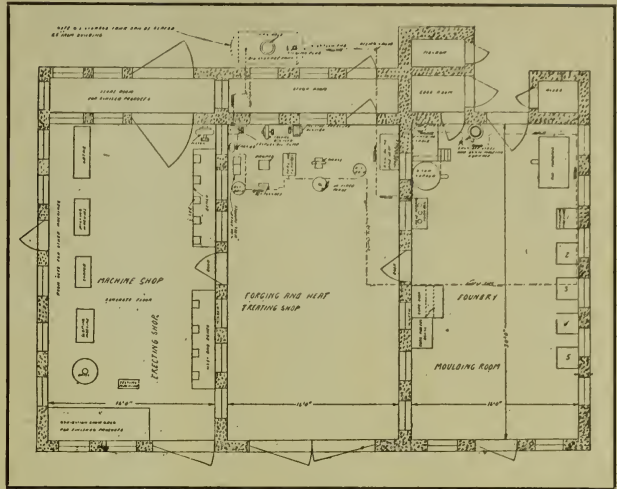
Could there be any greater memorial to Abraham Lincoln than a national university? Could philanthropy find a better field? Could the thousands of the millionaire, or the dollar of the toiler, be contributed to a nobler cause?

Statues and tablets from Maine to California have been fashioned to pay homage to his greatness; books have been written and poems composed. Songs glorify his fame and pilgrimages are made to his birth-place. A cross-continent thoroughfare has been named for him.

But Lincoln Memorial University is even greater than these. It is carrying on his work. It is continuing his teachings. It is doing what Lincoln wanted done; it is helping those whom Lincoln loved, dispelling with the light of opportunity the darkness of ignorance, and reclaiming the mountain people to greater usefulness.

Situated at the junction of Kentucky, Virginia and Tennessee, Lincoln Memorial University stands as the nation's greatest monument to its greatest man. The work begun by General Howard has not faltered, and, with the election of the Rev. Dr. John Wesley Hill of New York as chancellor, was given fresh impetus and wider scope. It is now planned to raise a million-dollar endowment, to insure the future of the University. Some of the foremost men in the land are backing the movement. Among recent endorsements, are the following:

President Wilson: "I have for a long time been genuinely interested in the wel-



PROPOSED NEW MECHANICAL ENGINEERING BUILDING FOR THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

fare of Lincoln Memorial University. I wish I could lend something more than my personal approval to the fulfillment of your plans. May I not take the liberty of bidding you God-speed in them."

Former President Roosevelt: "There could be no finer memorial to Lincoln than this University placed where you have it."

Former President Taft: "General O. O. Howard gave the last years of his life with unstinted devotion to the furtherance of the education of the mountain people of the South through the Lincoln Memorial University at Cumberland Gap. It is a worthy object and deserves support and encouragement."



AT HOME ON THE HORSE

